Alberta Finance
Economic Bulletin

ECONOMIC STATISTICS RELEASED DURING THE WEEK OF MARCH 30 2001 TO April 6, 2001

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Help Wanted Index (1996=100)	March			The help-wanted index is a measure of firms' intentions to hire new workers rather than giving overtime to existing employees. In March, the index fell for New Brunswick (-3.2), Ontario (-2.1%), Quebec (-1.8%), and (British Columbia (-1.5%). The largest increases were in Saskatchewan (2.2%), Newfoundland (1.5%), and Alberta (0.6%). Year over year, the index decreased for Canada (1.8%). Alberta bucked the trend with a 12.1% increase.
Alberta	176	0.6%	12.1%	
Canada	168	-1.8%	-1.8%	
Year to date				
Alberta			13.1%	
Canada			1.2%	
Building Permits ($ millions)	February			Housing permits increased 19.4% in first two months of 2001 compared to first two months of 2000, the highest increase since 1990. Most residential and non-residential activity took place in Toronto ($951.9 million) and Montreal ($345.6 million), contributing over 75% of the growth in the value of permits. In February, Canadian non-residential building permits declined for the first time in four months (-17.9%), concurrent with a slight decline of residential permits (-0.9%) due to the decline of single-family permits. In Alberta, residential permits were up (7.2%), but non-residential permits declined by 8.8%.
Alberta	423.2	0.8%	-6.1%	
Canada	3,446.2	-9.1%	11.9%	
Year to Date				
Alberta			-10.5	
Canada			19.4	
Alberta Drilling Activity (monthly average)	March 408	-4.7%	21.1%	The total number of active rigs drilling in Alberta decreased 4.7% in March to 408. Despite the seasonal decrease in drilling, the number of active rigs in Alberta was 21.1% higher than in March 2000. Similarly, in the first three months of the year active rigs drilling increased 12.5% over first three months of 2000.
Year to Date			12.5%	